

**Special Council Meeting
September 5, 2013**

I. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Barley called to order the special council meeting of September 5, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Elizabeth Brannon, Ray Jackson, Jennifer Laird, Janice McLean and Harold Taunton.

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Attorney Clayton Adkinson requested items # V (Fire department) & VI (sewer agreement) pulled from the agenda. He has no updates on those items.

III. 1st Public Hearing – 2013/14 Budget

A. Tentative millage rate

Councilwoman McLean motioned to adopt the tentative millage rate for the budget year 2013/2014 at 4.7302, less than the rollback rate of 5.85 by 2.73%, Councilwoman Laird seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5:0.

B. Tentative budget

Councilman Taunton motioned to adopt the tentative budget of \$4,524,917.00, Councilwoman McLean seconded. Ernest Nettles asked if the budget could be raised, to help accommodate the County funding budget shortfall. Attorney Adkinson stated that additional advertising and public hearings would have to be held in order to the budget or millage, once it has been adopted. There was no additional public or council discussion, the motion carried 5:0.

Councilman Jackson motioned to set the adoption hearing for the 2013/2014 millage and budget on September 24, 2013 at 7:00 pm, Councilwoman Brannon seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5:0.

IV. 1st reading – MSBU ordinance

Attorney Adkinson presented a proposed ordinance for council consideration, regarding the establishment of a Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) within the City limits. He stated that this is only the 1st reading and approval to advertise. The council would only vote for adoption at the September 26th council meeting, if negotiations with the County were proceeding as planned. Councilwoman McLean motioned to approve the first reading of the proposed ordinance establishing a MSBU within the City limits of Freeport, Councilwoman Brannon seconded. Comments included:

- Terry Raffield, Freeport firefighter, asked if the MSBU could be collected on behalf of the City, instead of the County, to fund the fire department. Attorney Adkinson replied that at this time, it could not. Fire services were being funded from ad valorem taxes.

- Mayor Barley stated that contrary to the newspaper article today, the City council is not trying to “give away the fire department.” He had been misquoted.
- Councilwoman McLean asked the firefighters in the audience, if they still wanted to remain with the City, even though some of them would most likely lose their jobs.
- Councilman Jackson requested more information regarding the ISO rating for residents – whether or not it would be reduced if the fire department merged with the County.

With no more public or council discussion, the motion carried 5:0. Attorney Adkinson read the proposed ordinance by title.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Robin Haynes, City Clerk

J.M. Marse, Mayor

Earl King, Council President